

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ



He is not here:
for he is risen,
Matthew 28:6

FACT OR FICTION?

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Dial-the-Truth Ministries

**The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is either ...
the greatest event, or the greatest fraud — in history!**

Did Jesus Christ actually rise from the dead?

Dr. Greenleaf, the Royal Professor of Law at Harvard University, was one of the greatest legal minds that ever lived. He wrote the famous legal volume entitled, *A Treatise on the Law of Evidence*, considered by many the greatest legal volume ever written. Dr. Simon Greenleaf believed the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was a hoax. And he determined, once and for all, to expose the "myth" of the Resurrection. After thoroughly examining the evidence for the resurrection — Dr. Greenleaf came to the exact opposite conclusion! He wrote a book entitled, *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice*. In which he emphatically stated:

"it was **IMPOSSIBLE** that the apostles could have persisted in affirming the truths they had narrated, had not **JESUS CHRIST ACTUALLY RISEN FROM THE DEAD, . . .**"

(Simon Greenleaf, *An Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists by the Rules of Evidence Administered in the Courts of Justice*, p.29).

Greenleaf concluded that according to the jurisdiction of legal evidence the resurrection of Jesus Christ was the best supported event in all of history!

And not only that, Dr. Greenleaf was so convinced by the overwhelming evidence, he committed his life to Jesus Christ!

What changed his mind? What evidence did Dr. Greenleaf encounter that so drastically turned him around? What facts did he discover that he could not rationally ignore?

In order to answer that, let's go back to that scene nearly 2,000 years ago. That eery night in the garden of Gethsemene, as a blood-thirsty mob came and arrested Jesus Christ. He was

brought before Pilate, and there in plain view, Jesus Christ was spit upon, cursed, he was laughed at, whipped, beaten. He was branded a blasphemer. And He was sentenced to die by the most extreme, shameful form of capital punishment ever devised — *crucifixion*. Galatians 3:13 reads, "*Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree*".

Jesus Christ died a curse. He died as a criminal. He died in open shame and disgrace. *In the eyes of the world, Jesus Christ died a total disgrace!*

And there stood His apostles — in stunned unbelief. Here was their hope. Here were 11 men that had forsaken all and followed this man. They believed in this man for 3 years. Can you imagine what was going on in their minds? *Didn't He heal the sick? Didn't we see Him walk on water? Didn't we see Him raise people from the dead? Didn't we see Him still the raging storm? And to end like this? THAT NIGHT, THERE STOOD 11 DEFEATED AND CONFUSED MEN! They had given up everything for naught. And then to die like He did. Beaten. Smitten. Humiliated. Guilty. Blasphemer. A complete disgrace!*

And Mark 14:50, says, "*And they all forsook him, and fled*".

There was the apostle Peter, the one who boasted, just days earlier, "*Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.*" (Matthew 26:35) There he was that night, standing in the mob, defeated, confused, and hurt. *Jesus was dead! He was crucified as a blasphemer!* One of the women saw Peter and said, "*you were one of them, you was with Jesus of Nazareth*". The Bible says "*he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.*" (Mark 14:71) Three times Peter denied the Lord, cursing and swearing, "***I know not this man***".

"And they all forsook him, and fled!"

BUT SOMETHING HAPPENED!

Something happened to that small band of frightened and humiliated men. . . Less than two months later — they went back into Jerusalem boldly preaching, at the threat of death, that — ***JESUS CHRIST WAS ALIVE!***

Listen to Peter in Acts 2,:

"Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs. . . ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. . . THIS JESUS HATH GOD RAISED UP, WHEREOF WE ALL ARE WITNESSES."

What transformed these fearful and confused men into fierce, bold lions?

Acts chapter 4:18-19, reads, "*And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.*"

And verse 20 reads, "*For we cannot but speak the things which **WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD***".

What had these men seen? What had these men heard?

What was it that beatings, threatenings, jail, torture and even death could not silence? In Acts 5, they put in jail and beaten — and verse 41 says *"And they departed. . . rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name"*.

What had these 12 men seen that they would eventually die a horrible death for?

Friend, there's only one event in the history of this universe that could explain such a change.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST!

One theory suggests the apostles fabricated the resurrection. Two major problems: One, If the body of Jesus Christ was available, you'd better believe, the Roman authorities would have paraded His body for all to see. Christianity was spreading like a wild fire! *And nothing could have quenched that flame quicker than the body of Jesus Christ!*

An article, suggesting Jesus faked His death and resurrection, appeared in the prestigious British Journal of the Royal College of Physicians. The article makes the assertion, *"the whole episode was planned by Jesus and his followers. . . that death would be feigned so that early removal from the cross might be secured."*

Do you know the problem with that — if the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not true — there were 11 men that knew it!

Remember, friend — *THESE MEN WERE EYEWITNESSES! They were there!*

*"Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were **EYEWITNESSES**. . ." Luke 1:2*

"That which was from the beginning, which we have HEARD, which we have SEEN WITH OUR EYES, which we have LOOKED UPON, and our HANDS HAVE HANDLED. . ." 1 John 1:1

*"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were **EYEWITNESSES** of his majesty." 2 Peter 1:16*

And these men went so far as seal their testimony with their blood! They died a horrible and martyrs death!

FOR A LIE. . . KNOWING IT WAS A LIE!

There is no way, these 12 men could have all been deceived.

For this reason — these 12 men not only died for a lie — and here is the catch — **THEY**

KNEW IT WAS A LIE!**If the resurrection of Jesus Christ a lie — THEY KNEW IT!**

You can not find a group of 11 men in the history of this universe who forsook all, were beaten, were jailed and even went so far as die for a lie — **KNOWING it was a lie!**

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!

Michael Green, principal of St. John's College, Nottingham, writes concerning the apostles, ". . . You could imprison them, flog them, kill them, but you could not make them deny their conviction that on the third day he rose again." Dr. Greenleaf wrote, "**IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE** that the apostles could have persisted in affirming the truths they had narrated, had not JESUS CHRIST ACTUALLY RISEN FROM THE DEAD!"

And then there's the man called Saul of Tarsus.

Saul of Tarsus thought Jesus was a false messiah, a fake, a blasphemer. And to exterminate Christianity totally, became his passion! The Bible describes him:

*"As for Saul, **he made havock of the church**, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison." (Acts 8:3)*

*"And Saul, yet **breathing out threatenings and slaughter** against the disciples of the Lord, . . ." (Acts 9:1)*

Saul of Tarsus was one of Christianity's most rabid persecutors. One day traveling the dusty road to Damascus, Saul burning with vengeance, with documents authorizing him to capture all the followers of Jesus. *But on the road to Damascus something happened to Saul of Tarsus. . .*

"And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest". (Acts 9:3-5)

And on the road to Damascus, the greatest conversion in history took place! For Saul of Tarsus, among the greatest enemies of Jesus Christ, that ever lived — became the Apostle Paul — **THE GREATEST CHRISTIAN THAT EVER LIVED!**

What happened to this man?

What could so transform this man, that he completely dedicated his life to spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ? And was later beheaded at Rome in 67 A.D. for his faith in Jesus Christ.

**There is only one possible explanation —
THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST!**

Gilbert West and Lord Lyttleton, two Oxford students, believed Christianity was a "tale gone mad" and they determined to refute the Christian faith. Lyttleton resolved to disprove the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, and West would refute the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They figured a careful, rational, examination of the evidence would easily disprove the Christian faith.

But after examining the evidence — they both separately came to the opposite conclusion! Lyttleton concluded that Saul of Tarsus did, in fact, convert to the Apostle Paul through Jesus Christ. And Gilbert West concluded that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was among the best established facts in all of history! West went on to write a book entitled, *"Observations on the History and Evidences of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ"*.

Professor Thomas Arnold, former chair of history at Oxford, and author of the famous volumes, *History of Rome*, was skillfully educated in the study of historical facts. Professor Arnold, stated, *"I have been used for many years to study the histories of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is PROVED BY BETTER AND FULLER EVIDENCE of every sort, than the great sign which God has given us that Christ died and rose again from the dead."*

After investigating the evidence of the resurrection, Lord Darling, former Chief Justice of England, stated, *"... there exists such **overwhelming evidence**, positive and negative, factual and circumstantial, that no intelligent jury in the world could fail to bring in a verdict that the resurrection story is true."*

To deny the resurrection of Jesus Christ you have to close your eyes to the overwhelming facts of history.

And friend that's a very serious thing to do

If Jesus Christ actually rose from the dead — what He said about "after death" is not something to take lightly!

And Jesus Christ warned of a place called hell — over and over! He mentioned hell eight times more than heaven! In Luke 16:23, Jesus described a man that had died, and Jesus said, **"And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments,..."**

Jesus said plainly — the man was in hell!

Jesus went on to describe the man, in verse 24, **"... for I am tormented in this flame."**

Friend, Jesus Christ believed in a place of fire and torment called hell!

What if Jesus Christ is Right?

Friend, I want to ask you the most important question you'll ever answer:

Have you ever received Jesus Christ as your Savior?

Not joining a church, not religion, not baptism, not good works, not sacraments — but trusted Jesus Christ and Him alone, as your Savior. If not, Friend you could be — one year, one

month, one hour, one minute, one heartbeat — ***away from eternity in a lake of fire!***

Revelation 20:15 says, *"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."*

Friend, God does not want you to go to hell. 2 Peter 3:9 says, *"The Lord is. . . not willing that any should perish. . ."* Jesus loved you so much He died on a rugged cross, to pay for **YOUR** sin, and to keep **YOU** out of hell! Revelation 1:5 says, *" . . . Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."*

Friend, don't EXIT this message, until you MAKE SURE you've received Jesus Christ!

I assure you — if you die without Jesus Christ — it'll be the biggest mistake you'll ever make!

DO NOT TAKE THE CHANCE!

Friend, If you've never been saved, don't wait another minute!

FRIEND, YOU CAN BE SAVED THIS VERY MINUTE!

It's simple to be saved ...

- **Know you're a sinner.**

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" Romans 3:10

"... for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" Romans 3:23

- **That Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for your sins.**

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, ..." 1 Peter 2:24

"... Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"
Revelation 1:5

- **And the best way you know how, simply trust Him, and Him alone as your personal Savior.**

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE SAVED?

Pray this prayer, and mean it with all your heart.

Just pray this simple prayer, and mean it with all your heart. Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and unless you save me I am lost forever. I thank you for dying for me at Calvary. I come to you now, the best way I know how, and ask you to save me. I now receive you as my Savior. In Jesus Christ name, Amen.

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